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Parental perceptions of behavioral changes in children following divorce

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PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGES IN CHILDREN FOLLOWING DIVORCE

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE PAGE

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research was undertaken primarily to describe the parental perceptions of the effects of divorce upon the children age eighteen or younger of the first married couples filing for divorce in Clackamas County, Oregon during 1975.

In order to give the reader an appreciation for the numbers of children affected as well as the trend of the phenomenon of divorce, some historical data will be presented regarding marital disruption, divorce, first marriage rate, and remarriage rate. For purposes of this paper, "marital disruption" will be defined as that disruption which occurs when adult parents separate, divorce, or die.

Divorce has been a rapidly increasing phenomenon and has been affecting more and more children recently. According to Robert Weiss (25) the divorce rate increased by more than 70 percent between 1960 and 1971. Further, the increase among first married individuals was twice as great as among remarried persons (25). Looking closer at the national divorce rate from a historical perspective, Weiss notes:

> The divorce rate in this country has increased steadily since before the turn of the century, with the exception of a period of near stability in the 1920s and a sharp rise during the years of World War II, followed by a drop to a much lower level and another time of near stability during the 1950s (25, p. 11).

Norton and Glick (15) present a historical look at the national trends around first marriages, divorce, and remarriage in graph form.

The original sources are the United States National Center for Health Statistics; the United States Bureau of the Census; and a previous work of the authors'. Rates for women are considered more consistent because they are not as affected by serving in the military.

Figure 1 is a graph of the data for the three variables based upon three-year averages from 1921 through 1974. The "First Marriage Rate" is the estimated annual rate per thousand single women fourteen to forty-four years old. The "Divorce Rate" is the estimated annual rate per thousand married women fourteen to forty-four years old. The "Remarriage Rate" is the estimated annual rate per thousand widowed and divorced women fourteen to fifty-four years old. The general observations are that all three followed roughly similar trends until the 1960s and 1970s. They all dropped during the depression years and rose sharply into the World War II years with the peak just after the war and a leveling off into the 1960s. Then the first marriages continued to drop while both the divorces and remarriages continued upward with the divorce rate increasing beyond the previous peak.

Helen Raschke (17), in a paper presented at the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Association of Family Conciliation Courts, claimed that one-third of the women in their thirties, if not already, will have divorced prior to their deaths.

Bateman (2) found that recent Oregon statistics paralleled the national scene in looking at data from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. In Oregon the number of divorces rose from 6,219 in 1965 to 8,258 in 1968 for an increase of 32 percent. In Multnomah County, the most populous by far in the state, the total population increased from 555,000

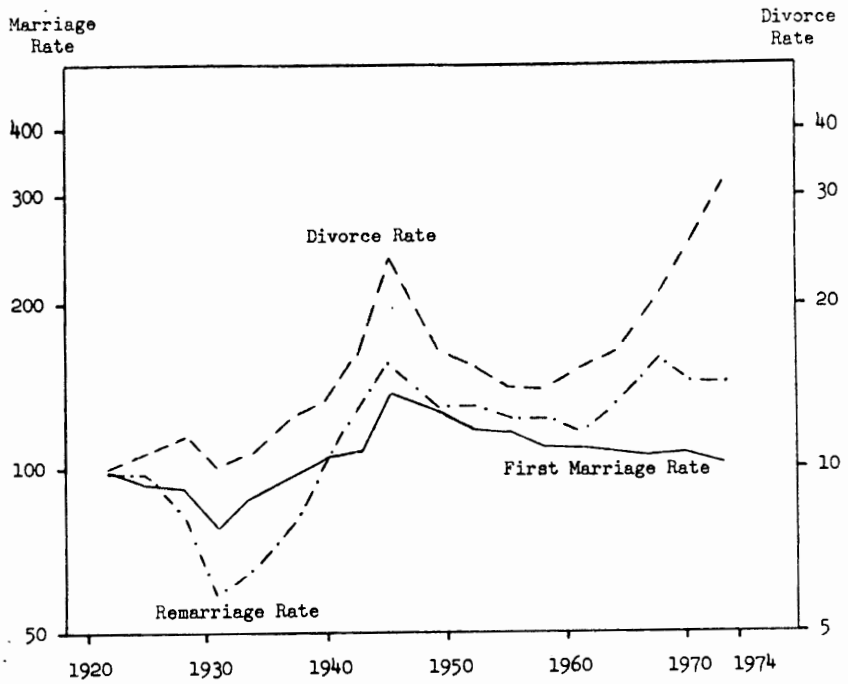

Figure 1. Marital instability.

to 555,700 or a mere .1 percent increase during the same period. The divorces, however, increased by 29.2 percent during the three-year period from 1965 through 1968.

In the 1975 Vital Statistics data (20), the Oregon divorce rate was represented at 6.8/1,000 population with a total of 15,526 divorces for the year. The rate by month throughout 1975 varied from a low of 6.2/1,000 population in August to a high of 7.7/1,000 population in September with no discernable upward or downward trend during the year.

For Clackamas County, the county from which data for this research are generated, Vital Statistics (20) reported the divorce rate at 5.8/1,000 population in 1975 with a total of 1,184 dissolutions and annulments. This rate fits squarely between Vital Statistics' computed rate

for Oregon of 6.8/1,000 population and the nation of 4.8/1,000 population in 1975.

Looking specifically at the number of children affected by divorce, McDermott (14) estimated that there are over six million children of divorce today. Weiss (25) estimates that 60 percent of divorcing couples have children at home. Raschke (17) claims that 80 percent of all children in the United States lived with two parents in 1976, 15.5 percent lived with mother only, and 1.5 percent lived with father only, while 3 percent lived with neither parent. However, she claims that one-third of the 80 percent living with two parents were in families that were "reconstituted," meaning that one-third of those children had already experienced some family disruption, by divorce, separation, or death. If Raschke's estimates are accurate, they indicate a total of 46.6 percent of all children will have lived without one of their parents for some time period during their childhood.

In 1975, there were 15,563 minor children affected by divorce in Oregon (20). That figure compares to 4,737 in 1960 and 10,803 in 1970, according to Vital Statistics. That means the number of children in the State of Oregon involved in divorce is currently more than three times greater than in 1960.

Vital Statistics did not present information by county. However, if the proportion of children per divorce is the same in Clackamas County as in Oregon, there would have been slightly over 1,184 children involved in 1975. There were slightly more than one child per divorce statewide and there were 1,184 decrees in Clackamas County.

By far, the most common composition of the "single parent family" (families where the children reside with only one of the biological parents), is with the mother and children residing together. Weiss (25) points out that, while recent surveys show that approximately 8 percent of children of the divorced population reside with their fathers, the proportion may be increasing slightly. It was 6.7 percent in 1970, 5.7 percent in 1971, 7.2 percent in 1972, 8.1 percent in 1973, and 8.4 percent in 1975 (25, p. 167).

Bane (1) points out that while reliable data about the scope of the institution of divorce is necessary for consideration of welfare reforms, the descriptive data regarding "marital disruption" (disruption caused when adult parents separate, divorce, or die) are both sparse and difficult to interpret. She believes the most valuable information is both (1) the number of children affected by "marital disruption" and (2) the length of time the disruption lasts.

The Census Bureau publishes statistics in a decennial census and annual Current Population Surveys which show the various kinds of living situations in which children reside at the time of the surveys. From these data we find that in recent years the proportion of children under age eighteen living in female-headed households has almost doubled from about 7.4 percent in 1955 to 14.4 percent in 1974. However, merely looking at a "static" number does not take into account the amount of turnover which may be occurring. Children may be involved in two or three disruptions during the year while others may turn eighteen or belong to families in which their parent reconciled before the population survey was taken. Such figures also fail to account for children of

disrupted marriages who live in other types of male-headed households with relatives, friends, or foster parents.

Therefore, to counter these and other problems of statistics, Bane (1) has combined data from several available sources and used more than one method to arrive at what she feels are accurate estimates of the numbers of children involved in "marital disruption." Her data represent a synthesis from: Survey of Economic Opportunity (SEO) 1967, a stratified random sample of 26,500 households; U. S. Bureau of Census 1971; Bureau of Vital Statistics--U. S. National Center for Health Statistics 1970, 1973, and 1975.

It is useful to present Bane's data in Table 1 below which clearly show that, while the percentage of children who experienced "marital disruption" due to the death of a parent decreased, the percentage who experienced disruption due to divorce increased from 1900 to 1960. This table also represents the total percentage of children experiencing disruption as decreasing slightly from 28.9 percent in the ten-year period from 1901 through 1910 to 24.7 percent for the ten-year period from 1951 through 1960. It is also surprising to this writer to note that the "marital disruption" lasted on the average between five and six years.

To describe the more recent years, Bane (1) presents data from the U. S. National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Table 2 illustrates the numbers of children involved in divorce only for the years 1955 through 1972. These data were generated by NCHS from twenty-nine states which use a standard registration form with predictions then being made for the total nation. Note that not only are the total numbers of

TABLE 1

MARITAL DISRUPTION AND CHILDREN UNDER AGE EIGHTEEN (PERCENTAGES)

	Children Born					
Disruption By	1901-1910	1911-1920	1921-1930	1931-1940	1941-1950	1951-1960
1. Death of Parent	22.6	22.2	16.6	14.5	10.2	8.6
2. Divorce	5.2	4.9	7.0	9.8	9.2	10.5
3. Other Reasons[a]	1.1	2.7	3.1	4.1	5.4	5.6
4. Total, All Causes	28.9	29.8	26.7	28.4	24.8	24.7
5. Mean Duration of Disruption (Years)[b]	6.35	5.49	6.23	5.57	5.15	5.2

SOURCE: 1, p. 107.

[a]Includes long-term separation, parents never married, and others.

[b]Based upon data for divorce and death of father only.

children affected by divorce increasing, but also the percentage of total children affected by divorce, indicating a gain in the divorce rate among families with children. Apparently, staying together "for the children" is becoming less popular. The proportion of children under the age of eighteen affected annually increased from .6 percent in 1955 to 1.6 percent in 1973 in spite of a decrease in the mean number of Children per Decree since 1965. These figures may not seem too striking until one tries to make a prediction from these data of the total number of children who will be affected by divorce over the full eighteen years of their childhood.

If one assumes that most children are involved in only one divorce in their lifetime and that the proportion of children affected by divorce will remain the same as the early 1970s rates, the total proportion of children affected over their lifetime can be estimated by

TABLE 2

CHILDREN INVOLVED IN DIVORCE, 1955-1972

Year	Total Number of Divorces Granted	Mean Number of Children/ Decree	Number of Children under 18 Involved in Divorce	Percentage of All Children under 18 Involved Annually in Divorce[a]
1955	377,000	0.92	347,000	0.6
1960	393,000	1.18	463,000	0.7
1965	479,000	1.32	630,000	0.9
1970	708,000	1.22	870,000	1.2
1971	773,000	1.22	946,000	1.3
1972	845,000	1.20	1,021,000	1.5
1973	915,000	1.17	1,079,000	1.6

SOURCE: NCHS, 1973 and 1975.

[a]Column 3 divided by the total number of children under 18 living in the United States each year.

multiplying the annual percentage rate by eighteen. Therefore, the 1973 rate predicts that 28.8 percent (1.6 percent times eighteen) of all children born during or after 1973 will be affected by divorce at some time during their childhood. This estimate may be conservative considering that the annual percentage rates were increasing steadily in the early 1970s and may continue to do so. In any event, this estimate comes close to the one already presented by Raschke (17).

Data have been presented which are descriptive of the scope of the phenomenon of divorce both nationally and locally. The literature review will present the concerns of researchers regarding the effects of divorce upon children's behavior. However, prior to the review, some

of the ideas regarding the reasons for the increase in divorce in the last two decades should be presented.

There are various reasons offered for this tremendous increase in the divorce rate. One of the chief reasons for the increase in divorce advanced by Weiss (25) is self-realization. Feldberg and Kohen (3) propose there is a basic contradiction between the institution of the traditional nuclear family and the "corporate capitalist order" which, because of the highly specialized sex-determined roles of husband and wife, the family can no longer respond to the individual needs of its members. In other words, structural problems from outside the influence of the family such as disruptive work schedules, lack of money, eventlessness of housewifery, and complicated schedule problems due to a poor residential location place impossible burdens upon the marital couple which are then experienced as fault or failure by individuals. There is very little time left for a couple relationship.

Norton and Glick (15) hypothesize a "marriage squeeze" which occurred in the 1960s as an incentive to divorce. By "marriage squeeze" they mean that the number of eligible women outnumbered their male counterparts, who by tradition are slightly older than the females, because the women were part of the post-World War II "baby boom" and the men had been born prior to the end of the war when the birth rate was lower. Many of the already smaller group of eligible males were either in the armed forces or in college trying to avoid the armed forces due to the Vietnam situation. They hypothesize that the abundance of young single women attracted unhappily married men to divorce and remarry.

Other pressures which may have accounted for an increasing divorce rate according to Norton and Glick include: an increase of women in both higher education and the labor force allowing for better alternatives to an unhappy marriage; an overlapping of traditional male and female roles which caused conflict between the marital couple; fewer negative constraints (e.g., a belief that divorce may be better than an unhappy marriage, no fault divorce, and resulting cheaper legal fees); welfare incentives; and problems faced by Vietnam era returnees.

Considering the tremendous increase in scope of the institution of divorce over the last twenty years, one has to question the effects upon this large percentage of children in our society becoming involved. This research will be concerned with several questions. What were some of the demographic characteristics of the first married divorcing population in Clackamas County, Oregon in 1975? What were some of the changes in the Clackamas County children in the areas of health, school behavior, and relations to others following divorce of their parents? Were the changes seen by the parents as positive or negative? Does the amount and/or direction (i.e., positive or negative) of the observed changes relate to age, sex, or number of children in the family? What changes in relation to work, residence, and schools were necessitated by divorce in the Clackamas County population?

In this chapter data regarding the scope and trends of first marriage, divorce, remarriage, and "marital disruption" have been presented. Estimates of the numbers of children involved in divorce, both nationally and locally, were presented, Finally, the thoughts of others regarding reasons for the increase in the divorce rate were discussed. The

following chapter will describe conflicting results regarding the affects of parental divorce upon children.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The focus of this review is to illustrate that controversy still exists regarding the effects of divorce upon children. One position is the commonly-held psychiatric position that the experience of divorce by a child will result in trauma, primarily through the experience of loss or rejection felt by the children when one parent leaves the household. It is argued that this trauma will prevent the children from meeting their developmental tasks, thus permanently affecting the child's personality development. Another position is that the children are damaged not so much through the trauma of the event of divorce but through the process of divorce when parents continue in a hostile conflicted relationship and involve the children in their battle. Another position is that children are not damaged by divorce, at least not to the degree that they are damaged when parents continue in an unhappy intact marriage.

The researchers of divorce differ with respect to their discipline, methodology, and results. The studies selected for the review will be grouped according to similarity of discipline and reported findings.

SOCIOLOGICAL STUDIES

The earliest and most comprehensive study of interest was the William Goode (4) study based upon data gathered in 1949 by interviewing mothers who were between twenty and thirty-eight at the time of divorce and residents of metropolitan Detroit. Goode did not attempt a longitudinal study because he did not believe the subjects would agree to several interviews. Instead, he drew his sample from women fitting the above criteria who had been awarded divorces at four points in time over a two-year period. Goode's total sample was 892, from which he actually interviewed and included 433 subjects. Though Goode's study was primarily aimed at the adjustment of the women, he did gather some information on how the women saw the adjustment of their children through such items as: "When were the children hardest to handle?" (4, p. 318).

Though Goode admits that his information did not show how emotionally taxing or how badly hurt the children were, the results of this item revealed that 55 percent of the respondents felt their children had not changed, 18 percent felt they were most difficult during the final separation or just after the divorce, 13 percent thought they were the worst during the marriage, and 14 percent stated they were the hardest to handle at the time of the research interview. For the remarried women the results appeared even more encouraging, as 75 percent of them thought their children's lives were better than during the previous marriage. Of the remaining, 15 percent thought the quality of life was about the same as before. In other words, only 8 percent thought the lives of their children had become worse as a result of the divorce and/or remarriage. It seemed strange to this writer that such results

could have been obtained in 1949 with the prevailing professional attitude still held today that children will become emotionally damaged by divorce to the extent that their personality development will be affected.

Another finding of Goode's was that the greater the trauma experienced by the mother during the divorce, the higher the proportion of the respondents who perceived their children to be more difficult to handle at some point during the divorce. This finding was significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Ivan Nye (16) gathered data by anonymous questionnaire from male and female adolescents in grades 9-12 in three Washington (State) high schools. A regular-interval sampling method was used. He gathered information about the structure of their families and attitudes and behavior of family members. He next classified the respondents as belonging to Happy Unbroken, Unhappy Unbroken, and Broken families. What is important about Nye's data is that he controlled for differences in socioeconomic status.

Nye's findings indicate that the children in homes broken by divorce were bothered less by neuroses (as measured by presence of psychosomatic illness and sensitivity to their physical appearance) than the children of Unhappy Unbroken homes. This finding was significant at the .01 level. Likewise, the children of Broken homes did better with respect to delinquency behavior and parent-child adjustment than children of Unhappy Unbroken homes.

Further findings indicated that the children of divorced parents did not have poorer adjustment than those of Other Broken homes.

Children living in the "Solo Mothers" homes showed better adjustment to their mothers than did children from Other Broken and Unhappy Unbroken homes. There were no significant differences between the children of Unhappy Unbroken and All Broken homes on church attendance, delinquent companionship, and school adjustment. The adjustment of the parents was seen to be superior in the Broken homes to that of Unhappy Unbroken homes.

To summarize, these findings apply to adolescent children in an urban area of one state (Washington) and are based upon adolescent response to their current family situations with no data regarding how long it had been since the divorce had taken place. In general, the children from Broken homes were seen as better adjusted developmentally than those from Unhappy Unbroken homes. In addition to the children, the adjustment of parents was superior in Broken homes.

Judson Landis (12, 13) published two retrospective studies of a non-clinical sample in the early 1960s. In his first (12), he employed an eight-page anonymous questionnaire with a non-random sample of 295 university students. Demographically, this sample represented primarily small, well-educated families with fathers in the professions and business. The respondents supplied information on their family background, evaluation of their homes prior to divorce, reaction to the divorce, post-marital history of their parents, and their own adjustment to the remarriage of their parents. These respondents were then compared in terms of how happy they felt their pre-divorce homes were. Many respondents were eliminated due to a lack of memory of the pre-divorce family and Landis divided the 183 remaining respondents into

three comparative groups in terms of happiness of pre-divorce home. The group which viewed their homes as happiest before divorce had the most traumatic adjustment. Younger children tended to be less aware of the traumatic effects than older children but sibling order analysis revealed no significant differences in either how children adjusted or viewed their pre-divorce home. Children whose pre-divorce homes were unhappy more often suffered trauma by "being used" or being drawn into inter-parental conflicts during and after divorce.

Though information was not presented on sample selection in his second study, Landis (13) collected questionnaires on 3,000 college students which revealed family backgrounds, dating histories, self-evaluation, the present marital status of the respondents' parents, and respondents' rating of the happiness of their parents' marriages up to the respondents' age of fifteen. He then made comparisons between children of Unhappy-Intact marriages and children of Divorced marriages. For instance, he found that both boys and girls in the divorced group reported a more distant relationship with their fathers than the children from the Unhappy-Intact group. However, in seven out of twelve of his measures of parent-child relationships there was a significant difference between the children in the Unhappy-Intact and Divorced homes, with the difference being in favor of the Divorced homes. He found no significant difference between children of Unhappy-Intact homes and Divorced families on dating maturation and self-evaluations.

PSYCHIATRIC POPULATIONS

Divorce has been held accountable for many subsequent problems in children including psychological problems, poor academic achievement, and juvenile delinquency. Many psychiatrists observe a correlation between behavior problems in children and the occurrence of parental divorce at some point in the child's history. From this observation the shift is made to assuming a causative connection.

A good illustration of this attitude appears in a recent article by Neil Kalter (9) where he points out:

> The incidence of children of divorce in our child psychiatric population was strikingly high, nearly one-third of all youngsters referred to the clinic having experienced a parental divorce. This finding suggests that children whose parents divorce may be especially vulnerable to the types of developmental conflicts that eventuate in psychiatric referral (9, p. 47).

Kalter examined 387 intake records of children referred for a psychiatric evaluation in order to determine the rates of occurrence of children with various parental status. He found that the children of divorced parents had a higher rate of the following behaviors: anti-social behavior, delinquent behavior (specifically drug-taking and sexual behavior), overt aggression toward their parents.

Considering the estimates of divorce rates and involvement of children presented by Raschke (17) and Bane (1) in the first chapter, it should not be surprising that the incidence of divorced parents would be high among children in a psychiatric clinic.

Westman (27) too writes from the perspective of a child psychiatrist working in both a family court and child psychiatric clinic. He points out that contrary to common beliefs, relationships continue after

divorce. Of the 71 percent of divorces involving children from a non-random sample of 148 in Dane County, Wisconsin, Westman determined by studying case history files that 52 percent were followed by other legal actions involving disputes over the children or money matters. Approximately 33 percent of the families experienced heated and continuous conflict following the divorce. Westman concludes that one-third of the divorces create environments which may be pathogenic (or create pathological response) for the children.

He then reviewed case file material of 153 non-random cases at the University of Wisconsin Child Psychiatry Clinic. Of his 153 cases, 23 or 15 percent had been involved with parental divorce. Of the twenty-three cases, fifteen showed loss of contact with one parent, eight out of twenty-three showed continued parental conflict, and none showed a "mutually satisfactory arrangement between the divorced pair regarding financial and child care arrangements" (27, p. 418). Westman's conclusion is that "the experience of divorce, itself, is less pathogenic than the nature of the parents' personalities and relationships with their children" (27, p. 419). The implication seems clear that Westman expects a large percentage of children affected by divorce to have psychological problems.

Another psychiatrist, John McDermott (14), conducted a retrospective study based upon clinic data from 1,487 cases seen at the University of Michigan Children's Psychiatric Hospital between 1961 and 1964, of which 116 were from divorced parents. After enumerating a staggering list of limitations in his methodology, not the least of which was the

fact that his sample is highly selective from a clinical population, McDermott interprets the results as follows:

(1) More recent and more sharply-defined complaints were seen among the divorced group

(2) A "cluster of symptoms" which he feels are associated with the higher rate of delinquency were seen among the divorced group

(3) More "trends" toward delinquency were seen among the divorced group

(4) Depression of moderate or greater magnitude was seen in 34 percent of the divorced cases and "hidden" in nearly all cases

McDermott (14), as well as Westman (27), call for intervention strategies which focus on the child being in therapy.

RECENT LONGITUDINAL STUDIES

Two teams of researchers have recently conducted longitudinal studies which have attempted to combine a clinical perspective with a control for some of the methodological weaknesses of other clinical or psychiatric studies.

Wallerstein and Kelly (10, 11, 21, 22, 23, 24) have recently published a series of articles from their efforts at a combination research and clinical intervention project in Marin County, California. Marin County is a relatively homogeneous suburban county with a population of approximately 206,000, composed primarily of affluent white families, and sports a high divorce rate of 6.8/1,000 and 6.6/1,000 population in 1973 and 1974, respectively. The comparative figures for the state

for the same years were 5.7/1,000 and 5.8/1,000 population, while the national rates were 4.4/1,000 and 4.6/1,000 population (24). The 60 families representing 131 children who ranged in ages from three to nineteen were referred to a service providing six weeks of counseling described to them as "child-centered," "planning-oriented," and "preventive" by attorneys, teachers, and counselors. An average of 14.2 hours were spent during which counseling was provided and data were collected. In an attempt to secure a non-clinical sample, a "screening out" process was undertaken to eliminate those children who had a chronic history of being troubled and who seemed "significantly below the developmentally appropriate norms" (24, p. 8). Still, the fact remains that these subjects were self-selected and came to the study expecting a service--namely, to prevent or lessen the possible negative consequences of divorce. People who did not expect such consequences would not likely be interested. The authors also indicate many of these parents had had prior psychological treatment for other problems.

Measurements were made at time of separation, one year, and four years post-divorce. The current series, however, reports only on the first two time points. Data were gathered from interviews of parents and children individually. Additional data were obtained from the schools of children for the previous year's performance. In short, the data represent an "in-depth" look at both the parents and the children and described responses which the authors feel are representative of normative behavior for people going through the crisis of divorce. One of Wallerstein and Kelly's findings is that divorce is a process of disorganization and reorganization of the family. This process is expected

to take several years to completion. In this sense they have swung away from the trauma-of-a-single-event idea, or the idea that divorce is like experiencing the death of a parent, and introduced the idea of impaired parenting and unrealistic fantasy formation by children as the main contributors to adjustment problems in children and adolescents. During the post-separation period, they found that the functioning of the custodial parent is the most important variable in determining whether young children will follow appropriate psychological development.

Another central finding of the study was that the changes in older children and adolescents was not as closely associated with the quality of the custodial parent relationship as with the younger children. There did appear to be a relationship between negative changes and the tendency of the custodial parent to depend upon the child for comfort and/or to use the child in continued parental conflict (24, p. 5). The authors conclude that the experience of divorce is very painful for many adolescents and that several factors seem to relate to the amount of developmental disruption experienced by this group. A long history of parental conflict prior to the separation along with the intensity of conflict by parents at time of divorce seemed associated with greater disruption by adolescents. The amount and speed of changes necessary, or having to grow up faster, seemed to have an effect. The degree to which the parents regressed and thereby placed extra responsibility upon the adolescent seemed to negatively affect how well they adjusted. The authors felt those adolescents who were able to establish some distance between themselves and their parents' conflicts and problems generally did better.

One of the objectives of the Wallerstein and Kelly research was to describe the developmental responses of children of various ages to the divorcing situation. The 131 children were divided into various age groups based upon their developmental positions. For instance, the thirty-four preschool children were divided into three smaller groups. Therefore, the findings reported all represent small Ns (9, 11, and 14 in the preschool groups). The overall finding was that fifteen of the thirty-four preschool children or 44 percent were in worse shape at one year after the divorce (22, p. 600).

The nine youngest preschool children initially responded to the divorce by demonstrating observable regressive changes which included whining, crying, fearfulness, anxiety, denial through fantasy, and sleep problems (22, p. 602).

Though there was no observable conflict between the two parents of the eleven middle preschool children, there still appeared to be a worsening of the psychological condition in seven out of the eleven children at one year following divorce. Their initial response was more "expressive" than the youngest children (22, p. 605). The authors generalized the worsened behavior at one year later as increased inhibition, a lessening of self-esteem, and neurotic symptoms.

The oldest preschool group (five- to six-year-olds) demonstrated negative changes in their school behavior such as restlessness, daydreaming, clinging, poor peer relations (22, p. 609).

Initial responses of the early latency children (10) ages seven and eight included sadness, fear, feelings of deprivation, and a sense of loss toward the fathers who were all non-custodial parents. These

children were old enough to be "used" by parents or pressured to take sides in the parental conflict but were not equipped to deal openly with the pressure. They maintained their loyalty to both parents in secret. They later expressed anger toward their parents to the therapists regarding this pressure.

The thirty-one later latency (23) nine- and ten-year-olds expressed somatic complaints such as headaches and stomach aches. One-half of the group dropped in school performance and showed negative change in peer group relationships. At the time of follow-up, fifteen or approximately 50 percent were almost completely rid of their previous upsetting reactions to the divorcing situation. The other half continued to demonstrate reactions such as depression, low self-esteem, poor school and peer behaviors.

The adolescents experienced feelings of sadness, betrayal, a sense of loss, shame, and embarrassment (21). There was some anxiety over their own future marriages. As was stated earlier, this group was much better at avoiding being drawn into their parents' conflict.

Wallerstein and Kelly's series of articles derive from an effort which was both research as well as therapeutic or intervention-oriented. This writer questions the degree to which the findings would be biased by the therapeutic relationship.

Hetherington and Deur (8) reviewed literature around the effects of father absence on the development of children. They concluded that an association does exist between father absence and (1) cognitive or academic achievement, and (2) sex-role appropriate behavior of both males and females. Further, their conclusions leaned toward a greater

degree of debilitation or disruption with younger children. They suggest the problems can be compensated for somewhat by other male siblings being in the family. Mothers can be helpful to compensate by being "loving" and reinforcing behavior which is appropriate to their sex roles. With males in the early years the inappropriate sex-role behavior shows up as "feminized" behavior but later disappears or becomes "compensatory masculinity." The situation with girls, however, appears to be reversed in that early differences are not apparent but at adolescence they exhibit inappropriate heterosexual relationships.

In the above article Hetherington and Deur are looking at a different and subsequent factor, "role modeling," which is a shift away from the idea of "trauma" suffered as a result of divorce and manifesting itself psychologically. The expectation of negative results following divorce is still prevalent. That earlier work led them to a study of a divorcing population, part of which focused upon the changes in interaction and the parental role between fathers and children.

In 1976, Hetherington, Cox, and Cox (7) reported on a longitudinal study of a non-random sample of forty-eight divorced parents and preschool children where custody was granted to the mothers and forty-eight intact families. The families were contacted through court records and lawyers. The intact families were matched to the divorced sample by age, sex, and birth order of children in the same nursery school; age, education level, and length of marriage of the parents. The sample had an average combined family income of $22,000 per year. Data were gathered from parent interviews, diary records, and observations of

laboratory parent-child interaction. Measurements were taken at two months, one year, and two years post-divorce.

The results of this study (7) revealed significant differences between the intact families and the divorced familes around the interaction patterns between parents and their children. The findings suggest that divorced parents are less affectionate, less consistent in discipline, lack control of, make fewer demands upon, and do not communicate as well with their children. They further indicate that effectiveness (gaining compliance) in dealing with their children was related to agreement between the two parents, in spite of the divorce. When there was low conflict and high agreement between parents around child-rearing issues and the father was considered well-adjusted (according to the California Personality Inventory and the Personal Adjustment Scale of the Adjective Checklist), the visits of the father fostered <u>better</u> mother-child interactions. When the interparental relationship was conflicted and/or when the father was poorly adjusted, visitation related to <u>negative</u> mother-child relationships. Other findings included a general loss of influence by fathers over time and a tendency for the family disorganization to be greatest at one year post-divorce and be leveled out by two years post-divorce.

REVIEW SUMMARY

The above review is representative of that research which does exist. It appears that some controversy still exists around the issues of the effects upon children of parental divorce. The research methods vary as well as the findings and interpretations of findings. People of

a more clinical or psychiatric persuasion tend to derive data out of a therapeutic relationship (in other words, rely upon perceptions of therapists) and usually show a more "in-depth" look as well as the presence of more disturbing results. Some of these data are retrospective, thereby not allowing for consistency of data collection and control for possible intervening variables. In addition, the sample is usually from a clinical or non-representative population with the number usually quite small.

The sociological studies in general seem to be more optimistic in findings, but here, too, random sampling is difficult. The data are usually based upon parental perceptions or perceptions of those children affected, but at some time post-divorce, thereby relying upon memories which have been altered through time. The ability to conduct a horizontal study is limited due to the expense of tracking subjects in a highly mobile society and the unwillingness of subjects to respond.

The following chapter will explain the methodology of this research which describes behavioral changes in the areas of health, school behavior, and social relationships of some Clackamas County, Oregon children following divorce of their parents.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research was undertaken in order to explore the extent to which parental divorce affects children in Clackamas County, Oregon. The objectives of this research were:

1. To describe some of the demographic characteristics of the first married divorcing couples with minor children filing for divorce in the Clackamas County Circuit Court in 1975.
2. To describe the parental perceptions of the behavioral changes, both positive and negative, of the children of these divorcing parents in the areas of health, school, and relations with others at six months after divorce filing.
3. To describe some of the family changes (primarily economic) which have taken place at six months after divorce filing.

More specifically, the following questions will be looked at:

1(a). What were the ages at marriage for the divorcing population?

1(b). What are the family sizes of the divorcing population?

1(c). What were the income levels of the divorcing population at divorce filing?

1(d). What are the levels of education for the divorcing population?

2(a). What changes occurred in the children in areas of health, school, and relations with others in the six months following divorce filing?

2(b). Were the perceived changes which occurred during the six-month post-filing period seen as positive or negative?

2(c). Does the extent and/or direction (i.e., positive or negative) of the behavioral changes in the children relate to age, sex, or number of children in the family?

3(a). How many of the divorces were still pending at six months after divorce filing?

3(b). How did the work patterns of the parents change during the six months following divorce filing?

3(c). Who did the children reside with at six months post-filing?

3(d). How had the economic situation changed at six months after divorce filing?

3(e). Did children have to change schools during the six months following divorce filing?

Keeping in mind the review of literature previously presented, it could be expected that most children would go through some kind of change which would be observable. Some studies indicated positive changes may be taking place. Others indicate age or sex could be a variable. From the information already presented, it would be expected that the mothers would, for the most part, become the custodial parent and these mothers would find themselves in a much depreciated economic situation. The following are hypotheses which describe some of the expected results:

1. Nearly all of the children will show some change.
2. There will be more negative changes than positive changes.
3. There will be more negative changes in younger children than older children.
4. There will be no differences in negative changes between males and females.
5. There will be more negative changes in children from a one-child family than in children from multi-child families.
6. The income of mothers as a group will be lower than the fathers at six months after divorce filing.

For purposes of this research, data from part of The Impact of Divorce on Children and Their Parents (IDCAP) were examined. IDCAP is a National Criminal Justice Educational Development Project and is producing a sociological analysis of the effects of divorce upon parents and children. The data available include both demographic data descriptive of the families involved as well as descriptive data regarding behavioral changes in the children. The study occurred in Clackamas County, Oregon in 1975. The sample was composed of 105 families drawn at random from the first married, divorcing couples with children eighteen years of under who filed for divorce in the six-month period from June through December of 1975. The original design called for interviews at three points in time during an eighteen-month period following divorce filing.

However, data were collected only at the time of filing ("first wave") and at six months post-filing ("second wave"). Data used for this research will come from the "second wave" or responses made at six

months after the divorce filing. It is felt that some explanation of the methodology with the "first wave," or from the beginning of contact between the respondents and research project, might be useful in considering or evaluating the validity of the findings and interpretations of the data.

In order to better insure the cooperation of the subjects in collection of the data, some groundwork was done with both the judges and attorneys in Clackamas County. Much detail work had to be done with the Clerk's office in order to insure the randomness of the sample. As each family was selected for the sample, a letter which was signed by the Presiding Judge of the Circuit Court was sent to the subjects. It was thought that, with the letter coming from the court, the subjects might view the project as more legitimate. Confidentiality was insured the subjects and they were notified they would be paid for their time. This latter point was considered an important element in the eventual response rate. Drawing of the sample began on June 15, 1975, starting with a case picked randomly, and continued by taking every other case meeting the above-described criteria. The drawing ended with 105 families.

Added to the letter from the court were endorsements from attorneys and schools. A copy of the Presiding Judge's letter was sent to the attorney of record. The letter was followed by telephone contact to answer any questions the subjects might have had and to set an appointment for an interview. One person was hired to make calls on "off" hours and on weekends and to coordinate efforts with the Project Coordinator and Project Secretary who made all other calls.

The "first wave" questionnaire was completed in privacy by the subject with the interviewer present to answer any questions. Completion of the questionnaire was followed by a taped interview which lasted from one to one and one-half hours. Having the interviews taped added a valuable qualitatitve element to the data collection. Subjects were paid $20 for the "first wave" interview. They were also told the project wished to contact them for a follow-up interview. Data were obtained from at least one parent in 90 of the original 105 families, with data from both parents of 50 families.

The data collection method for the "second wave," or at six months post-filing, was strictly an interview schedule which lasted from one to two hours. Those questions from the interview schedule which were referred to in this report are presented in Appendix C. Subjects were paid only $5 for this interview, which was not taped. Interviewers were all experienced in one form or another of interviewing the public and were given uniform instructions on a series of probes to use to elicit complete information. When couples had reconciled, a separate and shorter schedule was used and two interviewers were sent to interview the couple individually and simultaneously. Data were obtained from at least one parent in 84 families and from both parents in 58 of the total sample of 105. Six of the fifty-eight families had reconciled.

This "second wave" sample of fifty-two couples (excluding those who reconciled) was selected because most divorce research ignores fathers and this sample provides information from both mothers and fathers. The six couples who reconciled were excluded because the effects on children were anticipated to have been different if families were

able to get back together. Therefore, the sample studied for this research includes fifty-two families representing 108 children who range in ages from two and one-half months to eighteen years. There were fifty-nine males and forty-nine females. Exactly one-half of the children were in families with two children.

The primary concern of this research is the extent to which parents were able to see changes in three general areas: health, school, and relations with others. These three general areas in turn had several specific items of interest. The primary purpose, or dependent variable, is operationally defined as:

> Parental perceptions of changes in their children's behavior in any or all of the following 17 items: Health: eating, sleeping, complaints of feeling sick, fearfulness, other; School: attendance, grades, classroom behavior, relations with school friends; Relations: Brothers/Sisters, Myself (Respondent), Other Parent, Playmates/Friends, Neighbors, Grandparents, Parent's Friend or new Spouse, Other Relatives.

Some of the data needed for this study were available both on computer cards and printout form. However, the data were presented in "aggregate" form, or merely a representation of totals and percentages for each possible response to each item in the interview schedule.

Even though these "aggregate" data revealed how many mothers and fathers from the total sample of fifty-two perceived a change in their child/children on each particular item of the dependent variable, it was impossible to tell which children were perceived to have experienced the change. The responses to the various seventeen items of the dependent variable listed above (changes in children's behavior in health, school, and relations with others) were ordered from the youngest to oldest child. Instructions to the interviewers were to write in the age

and sex of each child, making number one the youngest. They were then instructed to write in an S for no change, a P for a positive change, and N for a negative change, and an X if not appropriate. Due to the length of time necessary to complete the interview, many interviewers arbitrarily decided not to write anything in the blanks unless there was a change. Many did not write in the age and sex of each child. Therefore, the results on the printout contained a large number of no responses which this writer interprets to mean no change.

Also, due to the omissions, it was impossible to discern the total number of second, third, fourth, etc. children in the sample and gave no basis for describing the extent of the change. It was further impossible to determine the age distribution and sex of the children. From only the aggregate data it was impossible to match parental responses to perceived changes to age, sex, or order of the children, as well as to any other possible causative variable.

Therefore, it was necessary to return to the actual interview schedules to determine the number, ages, and sex of all children in the families from the "first wave" questionnaire taken at time of divorce filing. This distribution was then matched up with the mothers' responses to the dependent variable, or seventeen change items, in the "second wave" schedule. For purposes of this research, the "aggregate data," or positive and negative responses by schedule item, will be presented for both fathers and mothers. The data which are rearranged and presented by child will represent the mothers only, as time did not permit rearranging data on both, and the mothers were assumed to have more

accurate perceptions, as most of the children were living with their mothers.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In this chapter the findings will be presented in three subsections to correspond to the three stated objectives: (1) to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample; (2) to describe parental perceptions of behavioral changes of the children; and (3) to describe some of the family changes.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data on the age of parents at marriage, the number of children per family, income levels, and education levels were gathered for the total sample. Those findings will be presented to allow for comparison of this sample to that of other studies. In Table 3 below are descriptive statistics of the ages of both mothers and fathers. The range of ages for fathers was from seventeen to thirty-one. The range for mothers was from nine to twenty-eight. Note that the ages for the mothers were slightly less than for the fathers, which is consistent with Vital Statistics data for Oregon.

TABLE 3

AGE AT MARRIAGE FOR MOTHERS AND FATHERS IN SAMPLE

	Fathers	Mothers
Mean	21.0	19.5
Median	22.0	21.0
Mode	22.0	22.0

The number of children per family is presented in Table 4 below. Note that the two-child family contains exactly one-half the total sample of children. The left hand column indicates the number of families in each class and the right hand column indicates the number of children in the class. The mean number of children per family in the sample was 2.08.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF CHILDREN/FAMILY FOR TOTAL SAMPLE (N=52 FAMILIES)

Number of Children/Family	Families	Children
1 Child/Family	13	13
2 Children/Family	27	54
3 Children/Family	8	24
4 or More Children/Family	4	17
Total	52	108

Data were available for both the mothers' and fathers' perceptions on family income at the time of divorce filing. There was some disagreement between the mothers and fathers with the mothers seeing the family income slightly lower as a group than the fathers. The two income classes most often picked by the mothers were $800-$999 and $1,000-$1,199 per month. The two most often picked classes by the fathers were $1,000-$1,199 and $1,200-$1,399 per month. Both groups indicated that five families had incomes of $1,800 or more per month. The median family income at the time of divorce filing as perceived by the fathers was $1,269.65 per month. The median family income at time of filing was $1,223.88 per month according to the mothers.

Presented in Table 5 below are data regarding education level in years of schooling for both mothers and fathers. The columns represent numbers and percentages of both mothers and fathers by education class.

TABLE 5

YEARS OF SCHOOLING FOR PARENTS IN SAMPLE

Years of Schooling	Number Fathers	Percent Fathers	Number Mothers	Percent Mothers
Less than 4 Years High School	9	17.3	4	7.7
4 Years High School	13	25.0	25	48.1
1-3 Years College	17	32.7	17	32.7
4 Years College	6	11.5	2	3.8
5 or More Years College	7	13.5	4	7.7
Totals	52	100.0	52	100.0

There were more mothers (55.8 percent) in the two lowest classes of education than fathers (42.3 percent). The percentage with some college (1-3 years) was exactly the same for the mothers and fathers at 32.7 percent. There were twice as many men (25 percent) as women (11.5 percent) who had enough years of schooling for a four-year college degree or better. Similarly, there were better than twice as many men (17.3 percent) as women (7.7 percent) who had less than a high school education. Other data examined showed that exactly 50 percent of the men indicated they had a high school diploma only, while 73.1 percent of the women indicated a high school diploma only. In general, the educational pattern of the women is more compressed than that of the men. It appears that the men had more options to both leave school earlier than high school graduation and to stay in school longer.

BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

The IDCAP "aggregate data" represented the number of positive and negative responses by mothers and fathers to each of the seventeen change items of the dependent variable. The initial observation of these data was confusing. The numbers of parents responding to those items were all quite low (highest for mothers was eighteen; fathers eleven) based upon a fifty-two possible on each item. There did not seem to be significant differences between the positive and negative responses. Further, as was mentioned earlier, the number of second, third, fourth, and fifth youngest children was unknown. Therefore, the numbers and percentages of everything beyond the youngest child (N=52) could not be adequately analyzed and interpreted.

In looking through the interview schedules from the "first wave," it was possible to determine the numbers of youngest, second youngest, etc. Those numbers are presented in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN BY ORDER FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
(N FAMILIES = 52; N CHILDREN = 108)

Order of Child	Number of Children
Youngest	52
Second Youngest	39
Third Youngest	12
Fourth Youngest	4
Fifth Youngest	1
Total	108

After these numbers were determined as represented in Table 6 above, the percentage of positive and negative responses for both the

mothers' and fathers' perceptions were computed for each item of the dependent variable and are represented in Appendix A. Data are represented only through the third youngest child due to the small numbers beyond that child.

From observation of these "aggregate data" by change item, there did appear to be a few items which stood out by their results. The results of these individual items will be presented in percentage form so that the responses of the mothers can be compared to the responses of the fathers. In each case the percentage indicates the relative frequency of mothers or fathers who perceived a change, either positive or negative, on that particular item in their children's behavior. With each child, the number of parental responses possible is different. The change items which seemed to stand out somewhat from the others were: eating, complaints of feeling sick (sickness), fearfulness, school attendance, relations with myself (respondent).

The first item in the section concerning changes in health has to do with perceived changes in eating habits. Below in Table 7 are data comparing the perceptions of the mothers and fathers on changes in eating habits for the children by order from the youngest to the third youngest. Positive, negative, and no change percentages are shown. Note that the number (N) is different for each order.

In general, the fathers saw more change on this item than the mothers. The fathers consistently saw more positive change than negative change; whereas the mothers saw more negative than positive change in the second youngest children.

TABLE 7

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES IN EATING HABITS BY ORDER OF CHILD

	Youngest (N=52)			Second (N=39)			Third (N=12)		
Parent	+	-	No	+	-	No	+	-	No
Mothers	9.6%	3.8%	86.6%	7.7%	10.3%	82.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Fathers	15.4%	13.5%	71.1%	17.9%	7.7%	74.4%	8.3%	0.0%	91.7%

NOTE: The +, -, and No columns for each order of child total 100%.

The next item in the health section which seems to stand out is complaints of feeling sick (sickness). Again, presented in table form, are data comparing the perceptions of mothers and fathers of changes in this behavior by order of child from youngest to third youngest. Again, positive, negative, and no change percentages are represented along with the varying number by order in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES IN SICKNESS BY ORDER OF CHILD

	Youngest (N=52)			Second (N=39)			Third (N=12)		
Parent	+	-	No	+	-	No	+	-	No
Mothers	3.8%	11.5%	84.7%	2.6%	15.4%	82.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Fathers	1.9%	5.8%	92.3%	2.6%	2.6%	94.8%	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%

NOTE: The +, -, and No columns for each order of child total 100%.

As the table indicates, there are differences in perceptions between the mothers and fathers. The mothers see more change than the fathers. Though both the mothers and fathers see more negative change than positive change on this item, they see it in different places.

The next item in the health section is change in complaints of fearfulness. In Table 9 are data comparing the perceptions of mothers and fathers on changes of their children on fearfulness from divorce filing to six months post-filing. Once again the data are presented by order of child.

TABLE 9

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES IN FEARFULNESS BY ORDER OF CHILD

	Youngest (N=52)			Second (N=39)			Third (N=12)		
Parent	+	-	No	+	-	No	+	-	No
Mothers	3.8%	11.5%	84.7%	2.6%	10.3%	87.1%	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%
Fathers	3.8%	5.8%	90.4%	7.7%	2.6%	89.7%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%

NOTE: The +, -, and No columns for each order of child total 100%.

In general, the results on this item are more negative than positive. There is disagreement on direction between the mothers and fathers on the second youngest children.

The next item which stands out is changes in grades in the school section. The same form of table will be used to show the comparison of perceptions of the mothers and fathers. The percentages indicate the relative frequency of change in school grades from the time of filing to six months post-filing. Table 10 below presents the results.

The changes in grades are seen for the most part as positive changes by both mothers and fathers.

The last item of change in the "aggregate data" which stands out and will be reported on individually is the item relating to a change in the relationship between the respondent, both mothers and fathers, and

TABLE 10

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES IN GRADES BY ORDER OF CHILD

	Youngest (N=52)			Second (N=39)			Third (N=12)		
Parent	+	-	No	+	-	No	+	-	No
Mothers	34.6%	11.5%	53.9%	9.7%	6.5%	83.8%	54.5%	18.1%	27.4%
Fathers	42.3%	11.5%	46.2%	22.6%	12.9%	64.5%	9.0%	18.1%	72.9%

NOTE: The +, -, and No columns for each order of child total 100%.

the child. Again, these data are presented in the same table form by order of child (see Table 11).

TABLE 11

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIP TO SELF IN ORDER OF CHILD

	Youngest (N=52)			Second (N=39)			Third (N=12)		
Parent	+	-	No	+	-	No	+	-	No
Mothers	34.6%	9.6%	55.8%	28.2%	10.3%	61.5%	33.3%	16.7%	50.0%
Fathers	19.2%	11.5%	69.3%	12.8%	10.3%	76.9%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%

NOTE: The +, -, and No columns for each order of child total 100%.

In Table 11 above, the mothers report both negative and positive changes, but the positive changes are two to three times as often as the negative changes. The fathers report more positive than negative changes on the youngest and second youngest children, but more negative change on the third youngest children. In general, the overall amount of changes perceived by the fathers is less than that of the mothers.

Thus far in the presentation of the findings, data on individual items which seemed to show more change either positive or negative than

the rest of the seventeen change items have been presented. In general, the mothers saw more change than the fathers.

Looking at the results of the perceived changes on an item-by-item basis does not allow for meaningful interpretation. For the most part, all of the percentages are quite low and, with the exception of the above-discussed individual items, would lead the reader to conclude that very little change of any kind took place in these children. That conclusion is one that would not be expected, particularly if one were from the "clinical" school.

Without knowing the number of positive and negative changes per child, it could be possible that nearly every child exhibited some change in behavior which could be perceived by parents but that change was in only one or two of the seventeen change areas. Therefore, the data were rearranged in order to match up the total positive and negative changes perceived by the mothers with the age, order, and sex of each individual child. This rearrangement of data was done for the mothers' perceptions or responses only, as the mothers are assumed to be in a better position to observe changes due to being the custodial parent for the most part and because the mothers in fact observed more changes.

When going through the actual interview schedules for the fifty-two mothers in the sample, there were some schedules with check marks rather than an S, P, N, or X, which were the instructions. In those cases, the open-ended comments were consulted to interpret the mark as either positive or negative. The data gathered indicated that most (74.1 percent) of the children did show at least one change. Only

28 children, or 25.9 percent of the total sample of 108 children, were perceived by their mothers to have made no change. This finding is consistent with hypothesis number 1. The range of the number of changes perceived for the eighty children who were seen to have at least one change was from one to fourteen as each child could be perceived to have both + and - changes. The mean number of changes perceived for those children having at least one change was 3.54/child.

Merely looking at the quantitative data does not give a very good overall picture of the adjustment of individual children as thirty-four children, or 31.5 percent of the total sample of 108 children, had both positive and negative changes as perceived by their mothers.

Therefore, in order to present the data in some qualitative sense and make some observations about whether or not the overall change or adjustment of each child was seen as positive or negative, a scale was constructed. Though not necessarily accurate or valid, for purposes of this practicum, all seventeen items were assumed to be of equal weight in order to facilitate a computation of the various positive and negative scores into a single score. This score would show both strength or intensity and direction (i.e., positive or negative). For example, a +1 and a -2 would give the score -1. Another problem existed in that preschool children did not have an equal opportunity to score as four of the seventeen change items referred to school behavior. A weighting system was devised to equate the scores of all three age groups and allow for presentation of data comparing all the age groups simultaneously. See Appendix B for an explanation of the weighting system.

After combining the positive and negative scores and adding in the weighting factor for the preschool children (defined as those with ages from 0-5.9 years), each child was given a single score for the overall change or adjustment. Those scores were then combined in a scale ranging from high negative change to high positive change. High negative change was defined as an overall minus score of five or greater. Medium negative change is an overall minus score of three to four. Low negative change is an overall minus score of one to two.

No change is simply defined as an overall change score of zero. In other words, a child's parents could have perceived five negative changes and five positive changes for the same child with the resultant score being zero, or no change.

On the other end of the scale, a plus five or greater would be defined as high positive change. A plus three to four would be medium positive change. Plus one to two is defined as low positive change.

The results for the total practicum sample of 108 children are presented in Table 12 below.

TABLE 12

OVERALL CHANGE OF CHILDREN AS PERCEIVED BY MOTHERS

	Negative Change				Positive Change			
	High 5+	Med. 3-4	Low 1-2	No 0	Low 1-2	Med. 3-4	High 5+	Total
Number	3	5	23	35	23	10	9	108
Percent	2.8	4.6	21.3	32.4	21.3	9.3	8.3	100.0

In looking at Table 12 above, we can see that the largest single category represented on the scale in the No Change category with 35 of

the 108 children, or 32.4 percent. By adding all the Positive Change scores to the No Change score, the result is that seventy-seven children or 71.3 percent of the total sample were perceived to have either no change or improved in the areas of health, school behavior, and relations to others from the time of divorce filing to six months post-filing. By adding the three negative change scores, it appears that 31 children, or 28.7 percent of the total sample of 108 children were perceived by their mothers to have changed for the worse. Stated another way, nearly two and one-half times as many children either did not change or changed for the better as those who changed for the worse following divorce of their parents.

The same format and style of Table 12 will be used to present the findings on how the positive and negative changes relate to age, sex, and number of children in the family.

The ages of the 108 children had been obtained from the "first wave" questionnaire. The total sample was then divided into three age groups defined as: Preschool (0-5.9 years), School Aged (6.0-12.9 years), and Adolescent (13.0-18.9 years). The overall change or adjustment scores for the children were then tallied into three individual scales. These findings are presented in Table 13, along with the results for the total sample, so that easy comparison can be made between each age group and the other age groups as well as between each age group and the total sample.

Table 13 shows only the numbers of children in each age group and each change class, which is not too revealing of differences. It does, however, illustrate the sizes of the various age groups.

TABLE 13

MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OVERALL CHANGE BY AGE OF TOTAL SAMPLE (BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN ONLY)

	Negative Change				Positive Change			
Age	High ≥5	Med. 3-4	Low 1-2	No 0	Low 1-2	Med. 3-4	High ≥5	Total
Preschool	1	1	8	12	5	3	5	35
School Aged	1	2	15	13	9	3	4	47
Adolescent	1	2	0	10	9	4	0	26
Total	3	5	23	35	23	10	9	108

The relative frequency, or percentages of children in each class, will be presented below in Table 14. Exactly the same format is used.

TABLE 14

MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OVERALL CHANGE BY AGE OF TOTAL SAMPLE (BY PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN ONLY

	Negative Change				Positive Change			
Age	High 5+	Med. 3-4	Low 1-2	No 0	Low 1-2	Med. 3-4	High 5+	Total
Preschool	2.9	2.9	22.9	34.3	14.3	8.6	14.3	100.2
School Aged	2.1	4.3	31.9	27.7	19.1	6.4	8.5	100.0
Adolescent	3.8	7.7	0.0	38.5	34.6	15.4	0.0	100.0
Total	2.8	4.6	21.3	32.4	21.3	9.3	8.3	100.0

In order to describe the results of how age relates to the behavioral changes, another table will be presented. In Table 15 below, the total positive and no change percentage and the total negative change percentage are presented. The "A" column contains data representing the

thirty-five Preschool children. The "B" column represents the forty-seven School Aged children. The "C" column represents the twenty-six Adolescents. The total sample is represented in the "Total" column.

TABLE 15

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CHANGES BY AGE

Changes	A	B	C	Total
Total No Change or Positive Change	71.5%	61.7%	88.5%	71.3%
Total Negative Change	28.7%	38.3%	11.5%	28.7%
Total	100.2%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

There do appear to be some differences when comparing the three age groups. Looking at both the Total No Change or Positive Change and Total Negative Change, it can be seen that the Preschool children have nearly exactly the same percentages as the Total Sample. In other words there is no difference between the Total Sample and the Preschool children. However, the School Aged and Adolescents both show some differences from the Total Sample and Preschool children with the School Aged children doing worse and the Adolescents doing better. Even with the School Aged children who did the worst among the three age groups, there were better than one and one-half times as many No Change or Positive Change children as Negative Change children.

The sex of each child was determined by consulting the "first wave" questionnaire and then compared to the mothers' responses on the dependent variable items in the "second wave" schedule. Table 16 below presents both the number and percentage of males, females, and again the

total sample that revealed positive and negative changes. The same scale is used that was first presented in Table 12.

TABLE 16

MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OVERALL CHANGE BY SEX

	Negative Change				Positive Change			
Sex	High ≥5	Med. 3-4	Low 1-2	No 0	Low 1-2	Med. 3-4	High ≥5	Total
Number of Males	2	2	12	20	14	5	4	59
Number of Females	1	3	11	15	9	5	5	49
Percent of Males/Class	3.4%	3.4%	20.3%	33.9%	23.7%	8.5%	6.8%	100.0%
Percent of Females/Class	2.0%	6.1%	22.4%	30.6%	18.4%	10.2%	10.2%	99.9%
Total Sample	2.8%	4.6%	21.3%	32.4%	21.3%	9.3%	8.3%	100.0%

Again, it may be helpful to present the differences in table form. Therefore, Table 17 below shows the following percentages for males, females, and total sample: Total No Change or Positive Change, and Total Negative Change.

TABLE 17

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CHANGES BY SEX

Changes	Males	Females	Total
Positive and No Change	72.9%	69.4%	71.3%
Negative Change	27.1%	30.5%	28.7%

As can be seen in Table 17 above, there is very little difference between males and females on extent and direction of change at six months after divorce filing.

Each child was identified in terms of how many children there were in the family, and that variable was related to the positive and negative changes perceived by the mothers. Table 18 below presents the data in terms of how many children from each category fell in each class along the scale.

TABLE 18

MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OVERALL CHANGE BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN/FAMILY (BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN)

Number of Children/Family	Negative Change				Positive Change			
	High ≥5	Med. 3-4	Low 1-2	No 0	Low 1-2	Med. 3-4	High ≥5	Total
1 Child/Family	0	1	1	7	1	1	2	13
2 Children/ Family	3	3	9	14	15	4	6	54
3 Children/ Family	0	1	9	13	0	1	0	24
4 or More Children/Family	0	0	4	1	7	4	1	17
Total Multi-Child Familites	3	4	22	28	22	9	7	95
Total Sample	3	5	23	35	23	10	9	108

In Table 18 above the fifth row is a total of two, three, and four or more children/family, and is included in order to make the comparison of "only child" families to all those where there are sibling relationships which could be an influencing factor.

Table 19 below shows the relative frequency or percentages which correspond to the number counts presented in Table 18.

With the aid of another table, comparison can be made between the "only child" family and the multi-child family as well as the three-child family. In Table 20 below, those comparisons are made for two

TABLE 19

MOTHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OVERALL CHANGE BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN/FAMILY (BY PERCENTAGE)

	Negative Change				Positive Change			
Number of Children/Family	High ≥5	Med. 3-4	Low 102	No 0	Low 102	Med. 304	High ≥5	Total
1 Child/Family	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	53.8%	7.7%	7.7%	15.4%	100.0%
3 Children/ Family	0.0%	4.2%	37.5%	54.2%	0.0%	4.2%	0.0%	100.1%
Total Multi-Child Families	3.2%	4.2%	23.2%	29.5%	23.2%	9.5%	7.4%	100.2%
Total Sample	2.8%	4.6%	21.3%	32.4%	21.3%	9.3%	8.3%	100.0%

separate measurements. The left column represents the Total Positive and No Change children. The right hand column represents the Total Negative Change children.

TABLE 20

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CHANGES BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN/FAMILY

Number of Children/Family	Total ≥0	Total -
1 Child/Family	84.6%	15.4%
3 Children/Family	58.4%	41.7%
Multi-Child Families	69.6%	30.6%
Total Sample	71.3%	28.7%

The Multi-Child Families closely parallel the Total Sample in both categories. The three-child families contained the lowest percentage of positive or no change children. The "only child" or One Child/Family children contained the highest percentage of positive or no change children. Stated another way, there seems to be an advantage to being an

"only child" and a disadvantage in being in a three-child family, according to the data.

FAMILY CHANGES

The third objective was to describe some of the family changes which had taken place by six months after the divorce filing. In this section, data will be presented regarding legal status of the divorces, changes in parental working patterns and economic situations, whether or not children had to change schools, and with whom the children are residing.

In examining the data, it is noted a high agreement level existed between mothers and fathers regarding the legal status of the divorce. Thirty-six fathers or 69.2 percent, and thirty-seven mothers or 71.2 percent, indicated that their divorce was final at the six-month point. Twelve mothers and fathers or 23.1 percent indicated the divorce was continuing through court. Three mothers and fathers marked this item "Other" and one father did not respond. In other words, 70 percent of the divorces were final with another 23 percent continuing toward finality, or 93 percent of this sample would soon be divorced if not already. Only 5.8 percent indicated at this stage a response which would allow for the possibility of some type of reconciliation.

The changes in work patterns indicated by the fathers are presented in Table 21 below. The left hand column (#F) indicates the number of fathers by category at the time of divorce filing. The next column to the right (%F) indicates the percentage of fathers by category at time of divorce filing. The third column to the right (#F')

indicates the number of fathers by category at six months post-filing, with the last column (%F') representing the percentage of fathers by category at six months post-filing.

TABLE 21

CHANGE IN WORKING PATTERNS OF FATHERS

Working Patterns	#F	%F	#F'	%F'
Full-time Employment	48	92.3%	46	88.5%
Part-time Employment	3	5.8%	3	5.8%
Not Working	0	0.0%	3	5.8%
Total	51[a]	98.1%	52	100.1%

[a]One father did not respond.

All those fathers responding indicated they were working at the time of filing, with forty-eight or 92.4 percent indicating they were working full-time and three or 5.8 percent said they were working part-time. Note that one father did not respond to this item. In comparison, at six months post-filing, three fathers or 5.8 percent indicated they were not working at all. At the second time point, forty-six fathers or 88.5 percent said they were working full-time, while three fathers or 5.8 percent indicated they were working part-time. These data indicate a slight decrease in number of fathers working at the second point in time by at least two and possibly three fathers, as it cannot be determined whether or not the no response at filing time represents a nonworking father. The overall change in working pattern for the fathers was a slight decrease in employment.

The same data were gathered for the mothers and are represented in Table 22 below. Again, the M represents mothers at time of filing and M' represents mothers at six months post-filing.

TABLE 22

CHANGE IN WORKING PATTERNS OF MOTHERS

Working Patterns	#M	%M	#M'	%M'
Full-time Employment	14	26.9%	29	55.8%
Part-time Employment	13	25.0%	4	7.7%
Not Working	25	48.1%	19	36.5%
Total	52	100.0%	52	100.0%

There is considerably more change in the mothers' working patterns than in the fathers' patterns. There is an overall increase in mothers working at least part-time from twenty-seven or 51.9 percent at filing to thirty-three or 63.5 percent at six months post-filing. The change in full-time employment is quite spectacular, as more than twice the mothers are working full-time at six months post-filing. There is quite a decrease in mothers working part-time from thirteen or 25 percent to four or merely 7.7 percent of the total sample.

Even though only nineteen women responded that they were not working at six months post-filing (see Table 22 above), twenty women responded as to the reasons they were not working. Of the twenty women who responded regarding the reasons they were not working, there were eight who advanced reasons which revealed they desired to work. Three said they could not get a job, while four said they were in a school program and one wanted to go to school first. Eight of the twenty advanced reasons for not working which indicated they were not actively

seeking employment. Therefore, of the fifty-two women surveyed, only eight or 15.4 percent indicated no plans to work.

When the mothers and fathers were asked the people now (six months post-filing) living with them, the two groups revealed radically opposing results as it relates to children. Of the fifty-two fathers, forty-three or 82.7 percent said children were not residing with them. On the other hand, forty-seven of the fifty-two mothers or 90.4 percent said they had children living with them. It appears that some of the children within families were split from their siblings, as nine fathers reported having children with them, while only five mothers indicated they were without children. Therefore, in this sample the reorganized families are fairly traditional, with mothers having custody.

Both mothers and fathers who were working were asked to indicate an income class which included their gross monthly income. Table 23 below presents the number, percentage, and cumulative percentage for the forty-seven fathers and thirty-two mothers who responded that they were working. F indicates fathers and M indicates mothers. Cumulative percentage is indicated by Cum. %.

As can be seen, the range for the thirty-two working mothers was from less than $200/month and to the $1,000 to $1,100/month gross income class. The range for the forty-seven fathers who responded to this item was from the $400 to $599/month gross income class to the $1,800/month and up class. Most of the mothers (93.8 percent) earned less than $1,000 per month. Most of the fathers (92.4 percent) earned less than $1,600 per month. The modal income class for the working mothers was from $400 to $599/month. The modal income class for the working fathers

TABLE 23

GROSS INCOME PER MONTH OF WORKING MOTHERS AND FATHERS AT SIX MONTHS POST-FILING

Class Interval	# of F	% of F	Cum. % F	# of M	% of M	Cum. % M
1. Less than $200	--	--	--	1	3.1%	3.1%
2. $200-$399	--	--	--	8	25.0%	28.1%
3. $400-$599	3	6.4%	6.4%	10	31.3%	59.4%
4. $600-$799	5	10.6%	17.0%	9	28.1%	87.5%
5. $800-$999	8	17.0%	34.0%	2	6.3%	93.8%
6. $1,000-$1,199	9	19.1%	53.1%	2	6.3%	100.1%
7. $1,200-$1,399	14	28.6%	81.7%	--	--	--
8. $1,400-$1,599	2	4.3%	86.0%	--	--	--
9. $1,600-$1,799	3	6.4%	92.4%	--	--	--
10. $1,800+	3	6.4%	98.8%	--	--	--
Total	47	98.8%		32	100.1%	

was from $1,200 to $1,399 per month. The median gross income per month for the mothers at six months post-filing was $539.30. The median gross income per month for the fathers was $1,165.83.

The quantitative data regarding changes in economic situations described above can be augmented by the qualitative responses by mothers and fathers to the question: How would you describe your economic situation as compared to before the divorce was filed? Table 24 below presents the responses to this item.

TABLE 24

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE IN ECONOMIC SITUATION

Perceptions of Change	#F	%F	#M	%M
No Change	14	26.9%	13	25.0%
Better	16	30.8%	16	30.8%
Worse	22	42.3%	23	44.2%

In Table 24 above, the left hand column indicates the number of fathers by category. The next column indicates the percentage of fathers by category. The next two columns indicate the number and percentage of mothers by category. The agreement between mothers and fatheres is striking on this item. However, it is surpising that sixteen mothers and fathers felt their economic situation had improved in spite of the depressed family income data. Therefore, the mothers' open-ended responses to this item were consulted.

The open-ended responses to why the mothers felt their situation had improved were reduced to four categories. Because some of the mothers expressed more than one reason, there are more than sixteen responses. Of the twenty-one responses, nine said their ex-husbands had been poor money managers. Another seven said there was more income (now working, receiving public help or child support). Three of the women attributed the improvement to their new husbands. Two indicated their ex-husbands drank too much or were not good providers.

Even though there was considerable changing of residence among the mothers and fathers, there were only three fathers and six mothers who indicated that their children had to change schools as the result of their moving following divorce filing.

In this chapter, the research findings have been presented in separate sections for each of the three research objectives. The following chapter will present conclusions and interpretation of the findings.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The conclusions and interpretations will be presented separately for each of the three research objectives: to describe some of the demographic characteristics of the sample; to describe parental perceptions of changes in their children in areas of health, school behavior, and relations to others; and to describe some of the family changes.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Among the three variables (age at first marriage, education level, and income) which have been used as predictors of divorce, Norton and Glick point out that age at first marriage remains the best predictor (15, p. 17).

The males in the sample were slightly older than the females at marriage, with the median age for males at 22.0 years and the median age for females at 21.0 years. This compares to 23.1 years for males and 21.1 years for females for the national median age at marriage for first married in 1974 according to Norton and Glick (15, p. 9). There has been virtually no change in the figure for men nationally since 1967, but the figure for women has been rising steadily since that date. The sample represents people who were slightly younger at marriage than the nation at large. As Norton and Glick point out, those who divorce before middle age have a two-year younger average age at first marriage

than those who remain married to middle age. The findings support age at first marriage as a predictor of divorce.

The educational pattern of the fathers as a group was more varied than that of the mothers, in that there were twice as many men as women with less than a high school diploma as well as with four years of college or more. More than one-half (61.5 percent) of the fathers had at most a high school diploma and over three-fourths (78.9 percent) of the mothers had at most a high school diploma. Twenty-three percent of the fathers had a bachelor's degree or better, while 9.6 percent of the mothers had a bachelor's degree or better. The studies in the literature review did not present descriptive data on education level. However, both the more recent longitudinal studies (7, 24) described their samples as middle class or affluent. As this sample is closer to national averages than the other two on income, it is also assumed to be closer to national averages on education level.

The sample was lower in terms of family income at divorce than both the Wallerstein and Kelly sample (24) and the Hetherington, Cox, and Cox sample (7). It appears the family income of the sample at filing was close to the national average. The median family income at divorce filing was slightly over $15,000 per year as perceived by the fathers, with the fathers perceiving it somewhat higher than the mothers. This figure compares to $22,000 per year for an average combined family income in the Hetherington, Cox, and Cox study (7, p. 422) and Wallerstein and Kelley's description of "affluent" (24, p. 7) for their sample. According to Bane, "in 1974, the mean family income of male-headed families was $13,788" (1, p. 111). It would be expected that a comparable

figure for 1975 would be somewhat higher. Therefore, this sample seems to more closely approximate the national average than the other two recent studies presented in the literature review (7, 24).

The last demographic variable for which a research question was posed in the third chapter is family size or the number of children in the families. The two-child family contained exactly one-half of the 108 children in the sample. There were only four families with four or more children in the family. The mean number of children per family was 2.08 compared to 2.2 per family in the Wallerstein and Kelly study (10, p. 21).

BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

For the most part the children were seen by their mothers to have shown either no change or positive change in the areas of health, school behavior, and relations to others during the six months following divorce filing. In order to derive a qualitative measurement of behavior change, the data were arranged along a scale of overall change by assuming all seventeen of the individual items to be equal. The positive and negative observations were mathematically combined into an overall change score for each child. The scores were weighted for the Preschool child as some of the change items were not applicable to them. The mothers perceived two and one-half times (71.3 percent) as many children showing overall no change or positive change as those showing an overall negative change (28.7 percent) during the six months following divorce filing. There were thirty-five children (32.4 percent) who showed no change according to the overall score.

When analyzing the data by age, all three of the age groups (Preschool, School Aged, Adolescent) showed well over one-half of the children in the no change or positive change category. There were some differences between the age groups with the adolescent group (N=26) containing the highest percentage (88.5 percent) of children showing no change or positive change. The School Aged (N=47) contained the lowest percentage (61.7 percent) of children showing no change or positive change.

There was virtually no difference (3.5 percent) between the fifty-nine males and forty-nine females on perceived positive and negative changes.

There were some differences in behavior changes by number of children in the family, but those differences were in the opposite direction of the hypothesized results. The thirteen "only child" families contained the highest percentage (86.4 percent) of children seen as showing no change or positive change. The lowest percentage (58.4 percent) of no change or positive change children was found in the eight "three-child families." When comparing the results for the percentage of children showing an overall negative change, the children were seen as changing negatively nearly twice as often (30.6 percent) in the "multi-child families" as in the "only child families" (15.4 percent). The children were seen as changing negatively more than two and one-half times as often (41.7 percent) in the "three-child families" as in the "only child families" (15.4 percent).

When looking at the "aggregate data" for both mothers and fathers, it was found that they disagreed both in amount and direction of

perceived changes. For the most part, the mothers saw more change than the fathers. This might be expected, considering that most of the children resided with their mothers, thus putting the mothers in a "better" position to perceive changes.

The study has defined "aggregate data" as those numbers and percentages of positive and negative change responses by mothers and fathers by schedule item rather than by child. When looking at "aggregate data," the five items upon which the children showed the most change were: eating, sickness, fearfulness, grades, and self (relationship to respondent). For the most part, the changes in eating, grades, and self were seen as positive by both mothers and fathers. In general, the changes in sickness and fearfulness were seen by both mothers and fathers as negative change. When analyzing the perceived changes in relationship between the parents and their children, the mothers perceived more positive change than the fathers. Two to three times more mothers saw positive changes in the relationships between themselves and their children than those mothers who saw negative change. Slightly more fathers saw positive change than those who saw negative change in their relationships with the two youngest orders of children, but the fathers perceived negative change in their relationships with the third youngest children. Stated another way, more mothers than fathers felt their relationships to their children had improved during the six months following divorce filing. Again, this conclusion may stem from the disadvantaged position of fathers with respect to contact with their children.

FAMILY CHANGES

Most (70 percent) of the sample were already divorced at six months after filing, with another 23 percent continuing toward finality of dissolution.

There was a slight (3.8 percent) decrease in fathers working full-time at six months post-filing. On the other hand, there were twice as many mothers working full-time at six months post-filing as were working full-time at divorce filing. The figure for mothers working either full- or part-time increased from 51.9 percent at divorce filing to 63.5 percent at six months post-filing. Only eight of the fifty-two women (15.4 percent) indicated plans to remain unemployed.

Children were living primarily with their mothers at six months post-filing as 90.4 percent of the mothers indicated they had children living with them and 82.7 percent of the fathers indicated they did not have children living with them.

The median gross income for working mothers at six months post-filing was $539.30 per month compared to $1,165.83 per month for the working fathers. When multiplying these figures by twelve to get an estimated yearly income, the figures become $6,471.60 per year for the working mothers and $13,989.96 per year for the working fathers. These figures correspond quite closely with the 1974 U. S. Bureau of the Census figures of $13,788 per year for the mean family income of male-headed families and $6,413 for female-headed families. In conclusion, the working fathers earn more than twice that of the working mothers. In addition, both the mothers and fathers earn very close to the national mean family incomes. It is not known to what degree the family

incomes of the working mothers are augmented by child support payments and other supplemental payments by fathers. However, for the total sample, 17 percent of the fathers and 15 percent of the mothers reported that child support was not being paid at six months post-filing.

Even though the family income was radically reduced at six months post-filing, there were sixteen mothers (30.8 percent) who felt their economic situations were better. There were two types of reasons for their feeling. One type was an elimination by the divorce of financial problems caused by their husbands being poor money managers, poor providers, or drinking too much. The other type of reason included a perceived relative improvement in economic situation due to the mother working, receiving public help or child support, and/or new husbands.

Mobility did not greatly affect changes in schools by children, as only three fathers and six mothers reported their children had to change schools as the result of their moving following divorce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall result of the research is encouraging in terms of perceived behavior changes in children affected by divorce. Most of the children either showed no overall change or that change was seen as positive. The original IDCAP sample contained 105 randomly selected first married families with children age eighteen or younger who had filed for divorce in Clackamas County, Oregon from July through December of 1975. This sample contained fifty-two of those randomly selected families from which data exists from both mother and father and who had not reconciled at six months post-filing. In other words, a sample bias does exist.

However, it is believed that this sample is more representative of the national divorcing population than the other two recent longitudinal studies (7, 24).

It is believed that this research would be more closely comparable to the more sociological studies (10, 11, 12, 13) which also presented optimistic findings. This research should discourage parents from remaining in an unsatisfactory marriage "for the children's sake."

The finding that mothers and fathers disagree in their perceptions of how their children are doing is very important for their ability to continue in the role of parents in spite of termination of their marital roles. Hetherington, Cox, and Cox found that the mother-child relationship was affected negatively following visitation of the noncustodial father when the parents were continuing a conflicted relationship. Similarly, Wallerstein and Kelley (10, 21, 23) reported negative behavior change in children when "used" or drawn into the conflict between the parents. These findings are borne out by this researcher's experience in counseling divorcing parents and children. It is felt that the adjustment to parental divorce of children can be positively affected by counseling which can align the perceptions of both parents and allow for a cooperative method of parental decision making based upon management of conflict.

Sprey (18) viewed the family as a system in conflict and proposed that, in order to adequately manage the conflict, family members would need negotiation and cooperation skills (19). Some marriage therapists are attempting to develop and utilize these theoretical concepts in order to teach couples these skills (6). The same theory and method could

be extended into the setting of the conciliation service as described by Weiss and Collada (26) in order to help divorcing couples reorganize their post-divorce family systems. This may provide for a more active role for divorced fathers in the lives of their children. Another new idea described by Grote and Weinstein (5) which may serve to limit the degree to which the legal system escalates parental conflict during and after divorce is joint custody.

The most disturbing result presented is the poor economic position of women in relation to men following divorce. In addition to the low income of women, Bane (1) describes the loss of "economies of scale" (1, p. 122). When one considers that most of the children reside in the homes of their mothers, the opportunity available to the children of divorce is much lower than to children of intact homes. Bane (1) points out a need for income support policies for single parent families, particularly during times "when children are young or when the fathers' remarriage precedes the mothers'" (1, p. 114).

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

"AGGREGATE" DATA FOR CHILDREN IN THREE YOUNGEST ORDERS

TABLE 25

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGES IN YOUNGEST CHILD FOLLOWING DIVORCE (N=52)

	Mother's Perceptions in Percentages		Father's Perceptions in Percentages	
Change Item	(+) Positive	(-) Negative	(+) Positive	(-) Negative
Health:				
Eating	9.6	3.8	15.4	13.5
Sleeping	9.6	1.9	3.8	9.6
Sickness	3.8	11.5	1.9	5.8
Fearfulness	3.8	11.5	3.8	5.8
Other	5.8	0.0	1.9	5.8
School[a]:				
Attendance	3.8	3.8	7.8	7.8
Grades	34.6	11.5	42.3	11.5
Classroom Behavior	19.2	7.7	11.5	11.5
Relations with Friends	7.7	3.8	11.5	3.8
Relations with Others:				
Brothers/Sisters	11.5	3.8	7.7	0.0
Self	34.6	9.6	19.2	11.5
Other Parent	11.5	15.4	3.8	3.8
Playmates	15.4	3.8	3.8	1.9
Neighbors	9.6	0.0	3.8	0.0
Grandparents	11.5	5.8	7.7	7.7
Spouse (Parent's Friend)	9.6	1.9	1.9	0.0
Other Relatives	11.5	0.0	1.9	0.0

[a]The percentages are figured on a different number for the school behavior section, as only twenty-six of the fifty-two youngest children were school age as defined as 6.0 years or more.

TABLE 26

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGES IN THE SECOND YOUNGEST CHILDREN FOLLOWING DIVORCE (N=39)

	Mothers' Perceptions in Percentages		Fathers' Perceptions in Percentages	
Change Item	(+) Positive	(-) Negative	(+) Positive	(-) Negative
Health:				
Eating	7.7	10.3	17.9	7.7
Sleeping	2.6	2.6	5.1	5.1
Sickness	2.6	15.4	2.6	2.6
Fearfulness	2.6	10.3	7.7	2.6
Other	7.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
School Behavior[a]:				
Attendance	3.2	3.2	6.5	3.2
Grades	9.7	6.5	22.6	12.9
Classroom Behavior	9.7	9.7	12.9	3.2
Relations with Friends	9.7	3.2	19.4	0.0
Relations with Others:				
Brothers/Sisters	17.9	2.6	7.7	0.0
Self	28.2	10.3	12.8	10.3
Other Parent	10.3	10.3	5.1	0.0
Playmates	10.3	10.3	10.3	2.6
Neighbors	10.3	2.6	5.1	0.0
Grandparents	7.7	7.7	2.6	5.1
Spouse (Parent's Friend)	2.6	10.3	2.6	0.0
Other Relatives	0.0	5.1	2.6	0.0

[a]The percentages are figured on a different number for school behavior as only thirty-one of the thirty-nine second youngest children were of school age. School age is defined as 6.0 years or more.

TABLE 27

PARENTAL PERCEPTIONS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGES IN THE THIRD YOUNGEST CHILDREN FOLLOWING DIVORCE (N=12)

	Mothers' Perceptions in Percentages		Fathers' Perceptions in Percentages	
Change Item	(+) Positive	(-) Negative	(+) Positive	(-) Negative
Health:				
Eating	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0
Sleeping	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3
Sickness	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3
Fearfulness	0.0	8.3	0.0	16.7
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
School Behavior[a]:				
Attendance	0.0	9.0	0.0	18.1
Grades	54.5	18.1	9.0	18.1
Classroom Behavior	18.1	0.0	0.0	27.3
Relations with Friends	9.0	0.0	9.0	9.0
Relations with Others:				
Brothers/Sisters	25.0	0.0	0.0	8.3
Self	33.0	16.7	0.0	16.7
Other Parent	16.7	16.7	0.0	8.3
Playmates	8.3	8.3	0.0	8.3
Neighbors	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grandparents	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3
Spouse (Parent's Freind)	8.3	0.0	0.0	8.3
Other Relatives	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3

[a]The percentages are figured on a different number for the school behavior section, as only eleven of the twelve third youngest children were of school age. School age is defined as 6.0 years or more.

APPENDIX B

WEIGHTING SYSTEM

Since each child had been placed in one of three age groups (0-5.9, 6.0-12.9, 13.0-18.9), the scores of the youngest, or preschool group were weighted or multiplied by .24 and rounded off to the nearest integer. The .24 figure was derived by dividing 4 (the number of school related items) by 17 (the total number of items) to determine by what percentage the preschool children's score should be increased to give them unbiased scores. Of the thirty-five preschool children, a change of score resulted in ten cases. For example, a combined arithmetic score of +3 in the preschool group would be multiplied by .24 to obtain .72. As .72 is greater than one-half (.5), the score would be rounded upward and recorded as +4.

APPENDIX C

ITEMS FROM IDCAP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Tell me those people NOW living with you:
___No one, ___Children, ___Mother and/or Father, ___Divorcing spouse, ___Housekeeper, ___Friends, ___Other (Describe)_____

2. How many times have you moved since the divorce was filed:
___None, ___One, ___Two, ___Three, ___Four or more.

4. How many times have your children changed school as a result of your moving:
___None, ___One, ___Two, ___Three, ____Four or more.

6. (a) How many years of school have you attended?
___Less than 4 years of high school
___Four years of high school
___1-3 years of college
___4 years of college
___5 or more years of college

(b) What is the highest degree you have attained?
___No degree
___High school degree or equivalent
___Post high school technical or trade school degree or certificate
___2-year college degree (Associate, etc.)
___4-year college degree (Bachelor's, etc.)
___Advanced Degree (Master's, Doctorate, Medical, Law, etc.)
___None of the above:_____

8. (a) What was your age at the time of your marriage?_____
(b) What was the age of your divorcing spouse at the time of your marriage?_____ Don't know_____

9. Are you currently working? ___Yes ___No
If yes, are you working ___Full-time, ___Part-time, ___Other (describe)_____

11. IF YOU ARE WORKING, what is your monthly income before anything is taken out?
___Less than $200, ___$200-$399, ___$400-$599, ___$600-$799, ___$800-$999, ___$1,000-$1,199, ___$1,200-$1,399, ___$1,400-$1,599, ___$1,600-$1,799, ___$1,800 & up.

15. When the divorce was filed what was your total family income?
___Less than $200, ___$200-$399, ___$400-$599, ___$600-$799,
___$800-$999, $1,000-$1,199, ___ $1,200-$1,399, ___$1,400-$1,599,
___$1,600-$1,799, ___$1,800 & up.

16. What was the work pattern of you and your divorcing spouse when the divorce was filed?
___Both worked full-time, ___Both worked part-time,
___Husband worked full-time, wife worked part-time,
___Husband worked part-time, wife worked full-time,
___Husband worked full-time, wife did not work,
___Husband did not work, wife worked full-time,
___Both of us were not working

17. How would you describe your economic situation as compared to before the divorce was filed?
___No change (b) ASK FOR REASON_____
___Worse than before _____
___Better than before _____
___Other _____

23. IF NOT WORKING (no to #9): What are the reasons you are not working?
___Cannot get a job, but would like to.
___It is important for me to be with children now, but want to work when the children are older.
___Am in school and plan to work after completing my schooling.
___Plan to go to school later and then work.
___Am home, and do not plan to work.
___Cannot work because of disability.
___Other (Describe)_____

24. If you are working, who takes care of your children on a regular basis?
___Other parent, ___Relatives, ___Child care center, ___Babysitter,
___Take care of themselves, ___Other (Explain)_____

27. What is the present situation regarding divorce?
___The divorce is not final, and is continuing through the court.
___The divorce is final and I have gone to court and picked up the decree.
___The divorce is final and my ex-spouse has gone to court and picked up the decree.
___My spouse and I have reconciled, and the divorce action has been dismissed.
___My spouse and I have reconciled, but the divorce has not been dismissed.
___Other (describe)_____

134. USE THIS FORMAT FOR EACH CHILD IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH, SCHOOL, RELATIONS WITH OTHERS. IF THERE WAS NO CHANGE PUT AN S, A POSITIVE CHANGE PUT P, AND IF A NEGATIVE CHANGE PUT AN N. IF ITEM IS NOT APPROPRIATE PUT AN X.

I would like to talk with you about any changes in the children's health, school, or relations with others since the divorce was filed.

I understand you have ___ children, who are ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ years old. Starting with the youngest (no information on children over 18), could you tell me about any changes in:

A. HEALTH:

	NUMBER CHILDREN FROM YOUNGEST TO OLDEST							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
AGE:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
SEX:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
CHANGE IN:								
Eating	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Sleeping	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Complaints-- feeling sick	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Fearfulness	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Other	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_

C. SCHOOL:
Starting with the youngest, could you tell me about any changes in:

	NUMBER CHILDREN FROM YOUNGEST TO OLDEST							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
AGE:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
SEX:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
CHANGE IN:								
Attendance	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Grades	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Classroom Behavior	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Relations with school friends	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_

E. RELATIONS:
Starting with the youngest child, could you tell me about any changes in:

	NUMBER CHILDREN FROM YOUNGEST TO OLDEST							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
AGE:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
SEX:	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
CHANGE IN:								
Brothers/Sisters	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Myself	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Other parent	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Playmates/friends	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Neighbors	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Grandparents	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Parent's friend or new spouse	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Other relatives	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_